

# ☆ Shepherd's Voice ☆

## Orcutt Christian Church Newsletter



Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

### The Minister's Musings

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### Revisiting Religious Freedom

Each of us must surrender our lives to the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. The commitment to the Lord and His Word disappeared decades ago from our shores. And, now the evangelized are outdoing the evangelists: they are teaching the teachers about what evangelism is all about. We are seeing an influx of very dedicated Christians to these shores from Africa, South America, and Asia. They are coming here to evangelize what to them is a pagan nation.

The Hispanic population in the United States is teaching American Christians the same thing: evangelism. There are now over 26 million Hispanics in the United States, and they are bringing their faith with them. While many, if not most, are Roman Catholic, it is estimated that over 20 percent are what is considered Protestant. The United States Catholic Conference says the majority of Catholics in the United States now are of Hispanic descent. If you and I surrender our lives to our Lord Jesus Christ, we will reach out to that 20 percent of Hispanics who are not Roman Catholic. But how can we do that? How can we become connected to those Protestant Hispanics who hold to the inspiration of Scripture; who do not subscribe to liberal, non Scriptural practices?

According to the leading Protestant Hispanics in the United States, I have been wrong in thinking that we needed to have a separate Spanish Worship Service. We need to keep our services in English, and reach out to the Hispanic community and “bring them in.” We need to love them as Christ loves them. We need to have their Christian influence, perhaps more than they need to have ours.

When I think of the area of Santa Maria in which we evangelize, I am awed at the ethnic diversity. Indeed, the inspired Apostle Paul informs us that

#### **Acts 17:26-27 (GW)**

*<sup>26</sup> From one man He has made every nation of humanity to live all over the earth. He has given them the seasons of the year and the boundaries within which to live. <sup>27</sup> He has done this so that they would look for God, somehow reach for him, and find him. In fact, he is never far from any one of us.*

Does that not suggest that we need to get over the “we-them” attitude. We need to reach out to our ethnically diversified community, and bring them to worship here at OCC. It is carrying our our Lord’s commission to reach, teach, immerse, teach and send out. And, what about those who are being incarcerated, and having their children ripped away. Is not Scripture full of commands to “love those who are foreigners” among us (Deut. 10:19) and to care for the vulnerable (Matt. 25:40). Grace has to triumph over justice. Pray over this, because this will help the cause of religious freedom.

**HAPPY 4TH OF JULY**

# Thoughts of The Elders

It's informative reading Matthew from Dr Eugene Petterson's Message Version:

## **Matthew 5:15-16 (MSG)**

***<sup>15</sup> If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. <sup>16</sup> Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.***

**shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives**

We don't need to be great speakers and bring thousands to Christ. All we need to do is show people the love of God by how we think and act. When Louis Kornfeld ran RadioShack in the early 80's, he wrote a column that ran inside each month's advertising mailer called Flyerside Chat. It was one of the highlights of getting my mailer - highly entertaining and very well thought out. He wrote a lovely little book on selling titled "To Catch a Mouse, Make a Noise like a Cheese!" To Catch a Mouse... is written in that same style. It's loaded with marketing wisdom, but presented in small "bites" that are often not well connected. His primary premise was: "Your most recent customer is your next best customer, " meaning that it is far more profitable to KEEP a current customer and bring him back again than it is to RECRUIT a new customer.

As Ambassadors of Reconciliation, our mission is to both recruit and keep, and that does entail reaching out.

When the evangelist Mark gave us his inspired gospel, this is the way he described it:

## **Mark 4:21 (NASB)**

***<sup>21</sup> And He was saying to them, "A lamp is not brought to be put under a basket, is it, or under a bed? Is it not brought to be put on the lampstand?"***

In 2 Peter 1:19, Peters speaks about a candle shining in a dark place. So, think about your light. How shall you let it shine? Let me suggest that we think like a candle.

**A candle's but a simple thing,  
It starts with just a bit of string.  
But dipped and dipped with patient hand,  
it gathers wax upon the strand.  
Until complete and snowy white,  
it gives at last a lovely light.  
Life seems so like that bit of string,  
each deed we do a simple thing.  
Yet day by day if on life's strand  
we work with patient heart and hand  
It gathers joy, makes dark days bright,  
and gives at last a lovely light.**